

**AGENDA ITEM:** Statewide Information Databases – California Digital Library's Government Information Initiative

**GENERAL OVERALL PROGRAM UPDATES:**

**CURRENT STATUS:** The California State Library (CSL) and the University of California's California Digital Library (CDL) have signed an interagency agreement whereby CSL agrees to fund and CDL agrees to facilitate the *Counting California* database. This is the first phase of CDL's Government Information Initiative, a proposal to develop a feasible way of acquiring and providing continuous and persistent access to government information available through California state agency Web sites, and to make this access available continuously to all Californians.

The first phase – the initial development of the database – has been completed and Library of California funds have been expended. The database prototype was released on January 19, 2001 for further testing. The general release is expected to occur in July 2001.

Because creating a robust data access tool demands the development and refinement of any number of processes, this prototype phase from January through June is a limited test release not meant to be accessible to the general public and will not be available from the public CDL Web pages. During this period CDL staff will incorporate what is learned from testing and feedback into further development of features and interface improvements. Also, during the prototype phase the database may not be available 7 days, 24 hours a day, and will not have all features operational.

Although the *Counting California* database will not be able to handle full public access during the prototype phase, CDL staff needs testing of the database and related feedback from beyond the UC library community. CSL staff has suggested, and CDL staff has agreed, that the following groups be encouraged to access *Counting California* during this prototype phase and to provide feedback:

- Library of California Board members
- Reference staff of the CLSA systems
- Appropriate California State Library staff
- A limited number of staff from school and special libraries

CSL staff will contact these groups, asking for their assistance in the testing and evaluation of *Counting California*. In addition, CDL staff has expressed an interest in directly communicating with users from these groups to learn more about what works in the database and what doesn't.

Exhibit A is a snapshot of the *Counting California* home page and the “About Counting California” section of the database. Staff can arrange for a demonstration by CDL staff at a future Board meeting, if there is interest from Board members.

**RELATED ISSUE TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD IN THE FUTURE:** Update on the *Counting California* database.

Relevant Committee: Support Services  
Staff Liaison: Tom Andersen